

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated December 18, 2003, Applicants have amended the claims to more clearly define embodiments consistent with the present invention. Claims 1-8, 11-19, and 22 are pending. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 8-9, 12-15, and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0110215 (Joao publication).

Claims 10 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as having been obvious over the Joao publication.

Claims 5-6 and 16-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as having been obvious over the Joao publication and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0004793.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as having been obvious over the Joao publication, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0004793, and U.S. Patent No. 6,654,749.

Claims 11 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as having been obvious over the Joao publication and U.S. Patent No. 6,213,780.

Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as having been obvious over the Joao publication and U.S. Patent No. 6,654,749.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 12, and they have cancelled claims 9-10 and 20-21. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 12 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to incorporate the elements of claims 9-10 and 20-21, respectively, to recite verifying and granting, based upon the verification, subscriptions to a particular user's activity.

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that "mechanisms for verifying permission and granting access based upon verification are old and well known in the art." (Office Action, p. 4 (Dec. 18, 2003).) However, Applicants have also amended claims 1 and 12 to recite particular types of subscriptions. In particular, a subscribing user can request a subscription to a library and a particular type of content within the library, the library representing a compilation of the user's activity including multiple types of content. These elements, the two kinds of subscriptions, are supported in the

application as filed by at least Figures 4A, 4B, and 4F and accompanying text in the specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of features in claims 1 and 12, including the recited types of subscriptions, would not have been obvious over the Joao publication. Even if the verification and granting of subscriptions are known in the art, the Joao publication provides no disclosure or suggestion for verification and granting of particular types of subscriptions. The use of subscriptions to libraries or particular types of content in them, as recited in claims 1 and 12, can provide patentably distinguishable advantages over the prior art.

Subscribing users may desire subscriptions to only particular types of content, for example, and the present invention provides for that advantage. The present application as filed recognized this advantage by stating: "A subscription can specify any type of content from any user or group of users, if permission is required and granted for the subscription. For example, a user may desire to subscribe to content in the on-line journal of other students in the same educational course." (Specification, p. 56, lines 5-8.) Other subscribing users may desire access to the entire range of a user's activity for on-line courses, the user's library, and the present invention provides for that subscription as well. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 12 define inventions patentably distinguishable over the Joao publication.

Aside from the Joao publication, the other references were cited against features recited in the dependent claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-8, 11, 13-19, and 22 are patentable at least because they recite the ability to selectively verify and grant subscriptions to libraries or particular types of content in the libraries relating to a user's activities with respect to an on-line education course, as explained above.

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Based upon the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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